October/November/December 1995 Volume 20, Number 5

A summary of recent news stories from the University of California San Francisco

UCSF

To Our Neighbors

UCSF gives first child cochlear implant

A profoundly deaf boy from Fairfield, Calif., has become the first child at UCSF to receive a cochlear implant. The multi-channel, 16-electrode device — which is implanted surgically — makes it possible for persons who are deaf to hear sound and even understand human speech.

Nicholas Cruz, age two-and-a-half, received the device in early September.

Called a Clarion and manufactured by Advanced Bionics, the UCSF device has demonstrated great success in adults, says Robert Schindler, MD, otolaryngology chair and director of the UCSF Cochlear Implant Project, laying the foundation to expand the program to include young patients. Anil Lalwani, MD, heads the children's program.

According to Schindler, more than 50 percent of adult patients at UCSF who have the device are able to use the telephone, which is an extremely high percentage for this ability among cochlear implant users. The Clarion's advanced electronic system is what distinguishes it from other cochlear implants in the same way that different computers possess varying levels of performance, he adds.

The Clarion represents more than 25 years of cochlear implant research at UCSF. The current device has been in clinical trials in adult patients for the past four years. In June, the FDA approved trials in children. For more information, call 476-2464.

Tom Wachs

Two-and-one-half-year-old Nicholas Cruz reaps the benefit of 25 years of UCSF cochlear implant research.

Colon cancer screening more available

UCSF researchers have opened a new center at San Francisco General Hospital that should make screening tests for colon cancer more widely available to patients. The new Sigmoidoscopy Clinic will train medical residents and primary care physicians in the community in the use of a new sigmoidoscope with a high-tech design.

SFGH is the only hospital in the Bay Area and one of the few in the country to make the high-tech device routinely available to examine patients, according to Johannes Koch, MD, clinic director.

The sigmoidoscope consists of a tube with a flexible tip that uses video fiberoptics to "see" inside the colon and detect abnormalities. In the new center, trainees will learn the procedure with a new flexible scope fitted with a black plastic sheath that is thrown out after each use. The disposable sheath shields all portions of the tube that could come in contact with the patient, thus eliminating any risk of contamination, Koch says.

The training center is a model in the move toward managed care because it will give primary care doctors the ability to perform a test that traditionally has been the province of specialty physicians — in this case gastroenterologists. Managed care seeks to shift the emphasis from specialty physicians to primary care physicians and emphasizes the use of preventive measures, like the cancer screening test.

For further information, call 206-4753.

Open enrollment: An opportunity to choose UCSF for your health care

Zuckerman/Fernandes & Partners

Above, one of the ads featured in a UCSF advertising campaign that coincides with open enrollment. The multi-media campaign has the slogan "The World's Best Neighborhood Hospital."

During the fall, many employers allow their employees to change their health care coverage during an "open enrollment" period. Open enrollment provides the perfect opportunity for you to choose a physician with the UCSF Medical Group for your primary care, which will give you access to the comprehensive health services offered by UCSF. This means that you not only will have access to primary and preventive services offered by UCSF, but if your health care needs become serious or complex, you will already be part of one of the world's most renowned medical centers.

The UCSF Medical Center has consistently ranked as one of the nation's top 10 hospitals for delivery of high-quality health care services, most recently in a survey in the July 24 issue of U.S. News & World Report where it ranked seventh overall.

To assure you have easy access to care, UCSF has convenient sites located throughout San Francisco and Daly City. One such location is Lakeshore Plaza at 1569 Sloat Boulevard, where you will have an opportunity to meet some of the UCSF physicians at an open house on Thursday, October 19, from 5 to 7 p.m.

For assistance in selecting a doctor, a list of health plans UCSF is partners with, or a list of available physicians, call the UCSF Health Connection at 885-7777.

In Brief

Center on Aging programs back by popular demand

The UCSF/Mount Zion Center on Aging is offering a series of six free education programs following last year's successful series.

The new series will begin with "Stroke and Stroke Prevention" on Saturday, October 28, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on the Parnassus campus. The second program will be on "Alzheimer's Disease — Fact and Fiction" on Saturday, November 18, from 8:30 a.m. to noon at the UCSF Laurel Heights Auditorium, 3333 California St.

Co-sponsored by the UCSF Stroke Service, the stroke program covers reducing risks for stroke. The Alzheimer's session covers the latest research, explains the difference between benign forgetfulness and actual memory loss and provides extensive information for family caregivers. Seating is limited. For more information, call 750-4109.

The UCSF/Mount Zion Center on Aging is affiliated with the Mount Zion Institute on Aging and UCSF. The series is co-sponsored by Mount Zion Health Systems and Health Net Seniority Plus.

Gay/lesbian/bisexual psychiatric ward opens at SFGH

San Francisco General Hospital, which is recognized nationwide for its ethnically focused inpatient psychiatric care, has opened a gay/lesbian/bisexual focus inpatient ward for psychiatric patients on Unit 7B. This is the first such specialized service in a public hospital, according to attending psychiatrist Orren Perlman, MD. Patients are involved with twice-weekly support groups, gay-affirmative family meetings, and have a library available with gay-oriented books and periodicals. For further information call 206-5158.

Eyedrops to prevent glaucoma-related blindness

UCSF researchers are seeking African-American volunteers for a study to determine whether eyedrops commonly used to treat glaucoma may be able to prevent the disease — a major cause of vision loss in the U.S. and the leading cause of blindness in African Americans.

If you are African American, between the ages of 40 and 80, and have ocular hypertension (high fluid pressure inside the eye that often precedes glaucoma), you may be eligible for the study. Many people with ocular hypertension don't know they have it, and prospective volunteers may call for a free screening. For more information or to schedule a screening, call study coordinator Peggy Yamada at 476-3711.

Women and heart disease

Bay Area women who have been evaluated for heart disease in the past two years may be eligible to participate in a new UCSF study designed to identify previously unrecognized risk factors. Women must have angiograms in order to participate. Any woman who participates will have a consultation with a referring physician to suggest further treatment. For more information call 476-2754.

More news for you

on the back page

What's happening

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Special Events

Events sponsored by Millberry Arts & Performances unless otherwise noted. Call 476-2542.

Thurs., Oct. 5
Free Depression Screenings. Sponsored by Dept. Psychiatry. Auditorium, Langley Porter Psychiatric Inst., 401 Parnassus. 10 a.m. & 3 p.m. Call 476-7394.

Wed., Oct. 11 & Tues., Oct. 24
Choosing a Doctor and **Understanding Medicare Managed Care.** Free lectures sponsored by UCSF Planning & Marketing. Oct. 11: Herbst Hall, UCSF/Mount Zion, 1600 Divisadero. Oct. 24: Lakeside Senior Medical Cntr., 2501 Ocean Ave. Both 2-4 p.m.

Thurs. & Fri., Oct. 12 & 13
Seventh Annual Faculty/Staff Art Show. Millberry Conf. Cntr, 500 Parnassus. Noon-6 p.m. Opening reception on Oct. 12 at 4 p.m. Call 476-6761.

Sat., Oct. 14
Self Magazine Workout in the Park. Interactive fitness & health expo. Co-sponsored by Public Service Programs. $10 in advance, $15 at door. Great Meadow, Fort Mason. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Call 476-4394.

Wed., Oct. 18
Women & Heart Disease. Sponsored by Women's Health Access & Women's Resource Cntr. Rm. 729, Nursing Bldg., enter through 513 Parnassus. Call 476-9293.

Thurs, Oct. 19
UCSF Medical Group Open House. Meet physicians from the UCSF Medical Group. Sponsored by UCSF Planning & Marketing. Lakeshore Plaza,1569 Sloat Blvd. 5-7 p.m. Call 885-7777 for lists of available physicians and health plans UCSF is partners with.

Sun., Oct. 22
Race for the Cure. Sharon Meadow, Golden Gate Park. 8:30 a.m. Call 284-9493.

Wed., Oct. 25
Affirmative Action: How Does It Affect Our Community? Panel discussion sponsored by The Auxiliary at UCSF/Mount Zion and Mount Zion Health Systems. $18. Metropolitan Club, 640 Sutter. 5:45 p.m. Call 885-7354 for reservations.

Gospel Choir at UCSF Fall Concert. $5. Cole Hall, 513 Parnassus. 6 p.m.

Fri., Oct. 27
Poets on Parnassus. A night of jazz and poetry. $5. Courtyard Cafe, enter through 513 Parnassus. 7 p.m.

Sat., Oct. 28
Healthy Halloween Happening. Information and screenings for Medi-Cal families. Sponsored by UCSF/Mount Zion & PacifiCare. Hamilton Recreation Cntr., 1900 Geary. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Call 885-7777.

Fri.-Sun., Nov. 3-5
Thurs.-Sat., Nov. 9-11 & 16-17
The Good Doctor. Parnassus Players present this comedy by Neil Simon. $5. Toland Hall, 533 Parnassus. 8 p.m. Call 476-6761.

Fri., Nov. 10
Twentieth Gordon Tomkins Lecture & Concert. Lecture on Mayan hieroglyphic code followed by performance of Beethoven's "Kreutzer" Sonata and Brahms' Piano Quartet in G Minor. Sponsored by Tomkins Committee and Herbert W. Boyer Fund. Cole Hall, 513 Parnassus. Simultaneous transmission to Rm. 303, Health Sciences West, enter through 513 Parnassus, and Carr Aud., SFGH, 1001 Potrero. 3-5 p.m.

Tues., Nov. 14
UCSF Orchestra Concert. Free for UCSF students/$3/$5. Millberry Gym, 500 Parnassus. 7:30 p.m.

Wed., Nov. 15
MCB Holiday Crafts Faire. Co-sponsored by EMPACT!. Mission Cntr. Bldg., 1855 Folsom. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Thurs., Dec. 7
Seventh Annual Holiday Crafts Faire. Co-sponsored by EMPACT!. Millberry Gym & Conf. Cntr., 500 Parnassus. 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Wed., Dec. 13
Holiday Concert. Features Vocal Chords, student a cappella chorus. Lange Reading Rm., UCSF Library, 530 Parnassus. 6 p.m.

Gay & Lesbian History Month

UCSF celebrates Gay & Lesbian History Month with the following events. Call 282-9650 for a full schedule of events.

Sat., Oct. 7
A Litany for Survival: The Life & Work of Audre Lorde. Film about the award-winning writer, cultural theorist & activist. Sponsored by Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Association at UCSF. Co-sponsored by Millberry Arts & Performances and Women's Resource Cntr. Advance tickets: $2-9. $2 more at door. Cole Hall, 513 Parnassus. 7 p.m.

Tues., Oct. 17
AIDS Services in San Francisco: Development & Availability. A Brown Bag Lecture sponsored by Public Service Programs. Herbst Hall, UCSF/Mount Zion, 1600 Divisadero. Noon-1 p.m. Call 476-4394.

Thurs., Oct. 19
Gay Rights, Everyone's Rights. How the current state of lesbian and gay rights affects everyone's rights. A Brown Bag Lecture sponsored by Public Service Programs. Rm. 125, Mission Cntr. Bldg., 1855 Folsom. Noon-1 p.m. Call 476-4394.

Lesbian Rights as Human Rights: Report Back from Beijing. Learn about the global movement to secure human rights for lesbians as discussed at the United Nations 4th World Conference on Women/Non-Governmental Organization Forum. Sponsored by Rape Prevention Education Program. Rm. 217, Nursing Bldg., enter through 513 Parnassus. Noon-1 p.m. Call 476-5222.

Aim for Wellness

Health education programs for back and knee care, CPR, smoking cessation and much more. Sponsored by UCSF and San Francisco Medical Groups and Health Net. Call 476-0373 for locations.

Thursdays, Oct. 5-Dec. 21
Lighten Up Weight Management. Develop healthy lifestyle habits for a sensible approach to weight management. $90/$180. 6-8 p.m.

Tues., Oct. 10
Managing Menopause. Learn how to maintain health and wellness. Co-sponsored by Women's Resource Cntr. 6-8:30 p.m.

Mon., Oct. 23
Stress Management. Free/$34. 6-9 p.m

Thurs., Oct. 26 or Mon., Nov. 6
Fit Talk. Learn the three components of a well-rounded exercise program. Free/$8. Oct. 26: 6-7 p.m. Nov. 6: 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Cole Hall Cinema

The Fall 1995 schedule includes "Smoke," "The Postman," "The Net," "Dangerous Minds" and "Apollo 13." Prices run $2 to $3.50. Sponsored by Millberry Arts & Performances. Cole Hall, 513 Parnassus. Call 476-2542 for schedule. (Movies subject to change.)

Recreation & Fitness

Over 100 recreation and fitness classes, including painting, jewelry design, acting, guitar, Kindergymusic, Brazilian/Caribbean dance, Feldenkrais and more. UCSF Millberry Fitness Cntr., 500 Parnassus. Call 476-1115 or 476-0350 for full schedule of classes.

Brown Bag Lectures

Free lectures held weekly at noon on Wednesdays in Rm. 300, Health Sciences West, enter through 513 Parnassus (P); monthly on Thursdays in Rm. 125, UCSF/Mission Center Building (MCB), 1855 Folsom St.; and monthly on Tuesdays in Herbst Hall, UCSF/Mount Zion (MZ), 1600 Divisadero. Sponsored by Public Service Programs. Call 476-4394.

Oct. 4
Proposition 187: Even Oral Health Care is at Risk. (P)

Oct. 11
Future Revolutions in the Treatment of Cancer. (P)

Oct. 17
(See Gay & Lesbian History Month events.) (MZ)

Oct. 18
Brain Plasticity. Implications for teaching the disabled and re-teaching the aged. (P)

Oct. 19
(See Gay & Lesbian History Month events.) (MCB)

Oct. 25
From Urban Trauma to Natural Disasters. How to cope with trauma. (P)

Nov. 1
Your Work Station: Friend or Foe? (P)

Nov. 8
25 Ways to Avoid a Lawyer. (P)

Nov. 15
The Headache Hour. New treatments for headaches. (P)

Nov. 16
Dynamic Health in Motion. Ergonomic tips for walking, running & hiking. (MCB)

Nov. 21
An Open Forum on Cancer. (MZ)

Nov. 22
Lowfat Feasting Over the Holidays. (P)

Nov. 29
Vision Correction Surgery. (P)

Dec. 6
Fresh Fruits & Vegetables: Essential for Good Health. (P)

Dec. 13.
Alternative Medicine: Sheep in Wolf's Clothing. (P)

Blood Donation

Wed., Oct. 18
Blood Drive. Millberry Conference Center, 500 Parnassus. 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

You don't have to wait for a blood drive to give blood. You may donate any weekday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m., or Saturday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., at UCSF's Blood Donor Center. For information & appointments call 476-6989.

AIDS Programs

The UCSF AIDS Health Project (AHP) offers a variety of free support groups for residents of San Francisco, including groups for people with AIDS, asymptomatic HIV+, HIV+ African-American heterosexual men, HIV- with AIDS-related concerns and caregivers. They also offer drop-in groups for HIV+ and PWAs, monthly disability workshops, social events for HIV+ and HIV- and a meditation and self-help group. The Project also provides free individual risk assessments & referrals. For more information, an intake interview for a particular group or an appointment for a risk assessment, visit the AHP at its new location, 400 Castro St., or call 476-3902.

Women's Programs

Events sponsored by the Women's Resource Center, unless otherwise noted. Call 476-5222 to pre-register for workshops and for information on ongoing support groups.

Thurs., Oct. 5
Violence Against Women & Children Around the Globe: Report Back from Beijing. Focuses on domestic violence and sexual assault as a form of torture, as discussed at the United Nations 4th World Conference on Women/Non-Governmental Organization Forum. Sponsored by Rape Prevention Education Program. Rm. 217, Nursing Bldg., enter through 521 Parnassus. Noon-1 p.m.

Sat., Oct. 7
Workshop: Basic Carpentry. $45-$60. Rm. 417, Nursing Bldg., enter through 521 Parnassus. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

(Also see Gay & Lesbian History Month events.)

Tues., Oct. 10
Action for Equality, Development & Peace: Report Back from Beijing. Focuses on global issues affecting women and local opportunities for action, as discussed at the United Nations 4th World Conference on Women/Non-Governmental Organization Forum. Sponsored by Rape Prevention Education Program. Toland Hall, 533 Parnassus. Noon-1 p.m.

Tues., Oct. 17
Can We Work Together? Recognizing and Resolving Sexual Harrassment. Rm. 225, Nursing Bldg., enter through 521 Parnassus. Noon-1 p.m.

Wed., Oct. 18
Workshop: How to Develop, Promote & Market Seminars & Workshops. $30-$40. Rm. 130, Clinical Sciences, 521 Parnassus. 6-9 p.m.

Thurs., Oct. 19
(See Gay & Lesbian History Month events.)

Sat., Oct. 21 & Nov. 11
Safe, Strong & Streetwise: Self-Defense and Assertiveness for Girls & Young Women. Ages 8-11 on Oct. 21, ages 12-16 on Nov. 11. Sponsored by Rape Prevention Education Program. $25 UCSF affilitates/$40 general public. Millberry Fitness Cntr., 500 Parnassus. 1:30-5:30 p.m.

Thurs., Oct. 26
Private Investigation in Theory & Practice: Lunchtime with Mimi Kochuba, Private Investigator. Toland Hall, 533 Parnassus. Noon-1 p.m.

Sat., Oct. 28
Workshop: Midlife & Menopause — A Fitness Plan for Life. $40. Millberry Fitness Ctnr., 500 Parnassus. 2-5 p.m.

Sat., Nov. 4
Workshop: Beyond the Living Will — Durable Powers of Attorney for Health Care. Learn how non-married couples can participate in the health care of their loved ones. $45. Rm. 130, Clinical Sciences, 521 Parnassus. 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Thurs., Nov. 9
A Reading with Ginu Kamani. Author of "Junglee Girl" expresses her outrage toward an oppressive society. Toland Hall, 533 Parnassus. Noon-1 p.m.

Tues., Nov. 28
Changing Our Mythology: A Discussion with Author Jewelle Gomez. Activist and writer discusses how women are portrayed in U.S. culture. Toland Hall, 533 Parnassus. Noon-1 p.m.

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UC San Francisco

Breast Cancer Screening

Women can have low-cost mammograms — X-rays to screen for breast cancer — from a mobile van that travels to convenient Bay Area locations. The procedure takes approximately 20 minutes and costs $65. Your physician's approval is required, plus his/her full name, address & telephone number to assure results are mailed promptly. Appointments must be made at least one month to six weeks in advance. Find out when the van will be in your neighborhood by calling 476-2193 between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday. A $65 mammography screening also is available at the UCSF/Mount Zion Medical Center Radiology Department. Call 885-7465.

Outdoors Unlimited

Outdoors Unlimited is a cooperative resource center for outdoor recreation and adventure, serving both the UCSF campus and the general public. OU Center, basement, UCSF Library, 530 Parnassus. Call 476-2078.

Fri., Nov. 17-Wed., Nov. 22
Sea Kayak Sale. Check out OU's used sea kayaks. OU Center.

Campus Tours

All tours are free and begin at 1 p.m. on the first Friday of each month. Meet in the Moffitt/Long Hospital lobby, 505 Parnassus. Sponsored by Public Service Programs. Call 476-4394.

Ongoing Meetings & Hotlines

Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group: This group for those caring for someone with Alzheimer's or a related dementia is facilitated by a social worker. Meets the first Saturday of the month. Co-sponsored by the Alzheimer's Association. 10:30 a.m.-noon. UCSF/Mount Zion Center on Aging Alzheimer's Day Care Center, 3600 Geary Blvd. Call 1-800-660-1993.

AWAKE: AWAKE (alert, well and keeping energetic) is a support and education group for people with sleep apnea and their families. Meets the third Thursday of each month and features guest speakers on topics relating to sleep apnea, followed by time for socializing and support. Bring your CPAP equipment to have it checked by a homecare specialist. Sponsored by UCSF/Mount Zion Sleep Disorders Center. Call 885-7886.

Cancer Referral Hotline: The UCSF Cancer Referral Service enables cancer patients to place just one telephone call and learn the names of UCSF doctors specializing in the kind of treatment they need. Call 1-800-888-8664.

Look Good, Feel Better: Expert advice on makeup, wigs and the use of turbans provided for people who have undergone chemotherapy or radiation. Held every other month in the 11 Long Solarium, Long Hospital, 505 Parnassus, and at UCSF/Mount Zion, 1600 Divisadero. Co-sponsored by the American Cancer Society and supported by the Donna Smith Fund. Call 476-1383 to pre-register for Parnassus meetings, 885-3693 for UCSF/Mount Zion meetings.

UCSF

University of California San Francisco
Public Affairs
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San Francisco, CA 94143-0462

The doctor said they would never conceive a child together.

Morning sickness was misery.

But it was never so appreciated. And come spring, waking up in the middle of the night — for feedings and diaper changes — will feel even better. Just 10 months ago, Amy and Pat McClelland were told that they could never have biological children together. But thanks to a prospective grandmother who's up to date on medical news, a team of specialists at the UCSF In Vitro Fertilization Program, and microscopic techniques that allow scientists to inject a single sperm into an egg no bigger than a grain of sand, the San Bruno couple is expecting their baby around Easter time.

The McClellands attempted for a year to get pregnant, before consulting a fertility specialist in December. "I assumed it was something with me," says Amy.

Tests revealed, however, that Pat was born without a vas deferens, the duct which carries sperm to the seminal vesicles and prostate gland. "The doctor told us that it was impossible for Pat and me to conceive," says Amy.

Amy's mother, however, remembered hearing of a revolutionary technique for infertile couples and urged Amy and Pat to contact UCSF. The UCSF In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) Program has delivered some 300 babies since it became the Bay Area's first such clinic 12 years ago. Today the program, directed by Mary Martin, MD, a national leader in the field of reproductive sciences, ranks as one of the top in the country, with a success rate far above the national average.

Although Pat's condition is somewhat rare, male fertility problems are not. Some 10 to 12 percent of couples in the U.S. have trouble conceiving a child, and in nearly half the cases, the problem is due to sperm dysfunction or male infertility.

In standard IVF, thousands to millions of sperm are mixed with eggs in a glass dish and fertilization occurs. In the McClellands' case, however, doctors would have to perform a new technique — intracytoplasmic sperm injection — which involves shooting a single, live sperm directly into the center of the woman's egg. The procedure, developed in Belgium and performed successfully to achieve a pregnancy at UCSF in June of last year, is an IVF boon, particularly in difficult cases of male infertility.

The process began in May when Amy began daily doses of fertility drugs to stimulate her eggs to mature. On July 13, obstetrician Carolyn Givens, MD, using ultrasound as a guide, removed 12 eggs from Amy. In a separate operating room, urologist Paul Turek, MD, used a technique called microscopic epididymal sperm aspiration to collect millions of sperm.

In UCSF's new "micromanipulation" laboratory, a team led by embryologist Roger Pederson, PhD, isolated several healthy sperm. Then, under a powerful microscope, Pederson — who trained with the Belgian scientists who developed the technique — used a thread-thin, hollow glass needle to pick up a single sperm, pierce the outer shell of Amy's egg, and inject one of Pat's sperm directly into the fluid center of her egg. Five of Amy's eggs were fertilized. The next day, Givens and obstetrician Eldon Schriock, MD, with the aid of a laproscope — a small lighted telescope inserted from a small incision in the abdomen — returned the embryos to her fallopian tubes.

Tom Wachs

Amy and Pat waited anxiously for two weeks, and then, after a pregnancy test, Givens and Schriock delivered the three magic words — "You are pregnant."

"We were ecstatic," says Amy, who realized that on their first IVF try they had beaten the odds. Today, Amy is having a normal and healthy pregnancy, and she is under the care of her regular obstetrician. She enjoyed working with the UCSF team and hopes to come back some day. "We want a bigger family," says Amy. "We're willing, absolutely, to try again."

— Andy Evangelista

For more information on the UCSF In Vitro Fertilization Program, call 476-2224.

Task force reviews issues related to assisted reproduction

UCSF Chancellor Joseph B. Martin has established a task force to review issues related to the use of assisted reproductive technologies. The UC Task Force on Practice Standards for Assisted Reproductive Technology will make recommendations regarding scientific, ethical and clinical practice issues of interest to UC medical centers and their associated reproductive medicine programs.

The task force was created to respond to University-wide concerns and issues raised at UC Irvine, where a group of prominent physicians practicing at the UCI Center for Reproductive Health are currently under investigation for alleged scientific, clinical and administrative misconduct.

The UC task force will focus on informed patient consent and the absence of conflicts of interest. These standards are important for building high-quality clinical programs and engendering patient trust, especially for programs involving in vitro fertilization and other reproductive technologies.

To Our Neighbors
October/November/December 1995

San Bruno couple expects baby thanks to new IVF technique

UCSF gives first child cochlear implant

Open enrollment — the time to change your health plan

UCSF
University of California San Francisco
3333 California Street, San Francisco, CA 94143-0462

To Our Neighbors

New drug cuts kidney rejection by nearly half

A new agent that reduces organ rejection by nearly 50 percent, tested in clinical trials at UCSF, now is available for kidney transplant patients. The immunosuppressant drug is the first advancement in 12 years that significantly reduces treatment failure for patients undergoing kidney transplantation.

"Despite advances in organ transplantation, acute rejection has remained a major obstacle to maximizing transplant therapy," says Stephen J. Tomlanovich, MD, principal investigator of the UCSF clinical trial.

During the first year after transplantation, about half of kidney transplant patients experience acute episodes of rejection — an immune system response that occurs when the body perceives the transplanted organ as "foreign," Tomlanovich says.

Safety and efficacy of the drug — CellCept (mycophenolate mofetil) — were assessed in clinical trials conducted at 14 sites in the U.S., as well as at sites in Canada, Europe and Australia. UCSF, with the largest kidney transplant program on the West Coast, was the only site in Northern California for the trials.

In the clinical trials, CellCept given in combination with other approved anti-rejection drugs (corticosteroids and cyclosporine) cut current rejection rates in half when compared to the immunosuppressant azathioprine or a placebo.

Reporting domestic violence may harm patients

State laws that require doctors and hospitals to report domestic violence cases to police may harm patients by putting them at risk of retaliation, discouraging them from seeking medical care and violating their confidentiality and autonomy, according to a report by two UCSF physicians and a San Francisco family law attorney.

Forty-five states now have some form of reporting requirement that may mandate that health care providers report cases of domestic violence or abuse to police, according to the report. While seemingly

well-intentioned, these laws may put patients at greater risk and pose ethical dilemmas for physicians when patients do not want their cases reported, says Dean Schillinger, MD, a physician at SFGH.

Physicians should work with legislators in reforming the laws to be more responsive to patients' needs and to allow patients to decide whether their cases are reported, says Schillinger.

The report was co-authored by Bernard Lo, MD, director of the Program in Medical Ethics, and attorney Ariella Hyman, JD.

Volunteers needed for prostate cancer study

Researchers at the San Francisco Veterans Affairs Medical Center are seeking men 55 or older for a prostate cancer prevention trial. Both veterans and non-veterans may be eligible.

Sponsored by the National Cancer Institute, the nationwide Prostate Cancer Prevention Trial is designed to determine whether the drug finasteride can prevent prostate cancer, the second leading cause of cancer deaths in American men.

Half of the study volunteers will receive finasteride and half a placebo. All will have a yearly blood test and rectal exam for prostate cancer, plus a prostate biopsy at the conclusion of the seven-year study. Examinations, blood tests and medications are provided free of charge.

For further information, call study director Joseph Presti, MD, at 668-7441.

Potential help for leg ulcers

If you have ulcers on your legs due to poor circulation you may be eligible for a study to determine the role of nutrition in healing this condition. Participants may be of any age, must have wounds or sores on their legs, speak English, have a telephone and be able to come in for two four-hour visits at UCSF four weeks apart. A $50 compensation fee will be offered at the conclusion of the study. For further information, call the Department of Physiological Nursing at 476-4412.